

TICOM/I-196

INTERROGATION OF ILSE RANTZAU OF THE GERMAN
NAVAL SIGINT SERVICE

The attached is a report of the interrogation of GRAEFIN ZU RANTZAU, carried out at the request of TICOM by GSI, HQ, 1 Corps, (in conjunction with Vice Admiral Commanding British Naval Forces, Germany - INT/6b/769 of 27th May, 1946, refers).

2. The prisoner was employed from April 1943, as a Marinshelferin and served with MPA FLANDERS, MPHS GRONINGEN and MPNS BORKUM.

TICOM
21st June, 1946.

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INTERROGATION REPORT ON RANTZAU, ILSE: GRAEFIN ZU.

(29.3.20).

In accordance with brief indicated in GSI, HQ, 1 Corps Dist letter CI/P/12800, dated 19 Mar 46.

1. General.

Subject has been interrogated as indicated, and has given the following information:

2. Marine Peil Abteilung, "FLANDERN" 1943 BRUGES.

Subject states she was studying languages at the Interpreters' Institute, University of HEIDELBERG, when a representative of the OKM came to HEIDELBERG to advise English-speaking girls to apply for appointments with various "Marine Dienststellen". The only condition and qualification stipulated was a good knowledge of the English language. About the nature of the work nothing was said at the time, and subject states that what attracted her was the fact that the "Dienststelle" was situated in BRUGES.

Subject states she was posted to 2 MEHA, LEER/OSTERFRIESLAND. On 23 Apr 1943, one week after joining up, she was posted to Marine Peil Abteilung, FLANDERN, in BRUGES, where she worked as a telephone-watcher.

This work entailed overhearing the conversations between British ships, and between these ships and the mainland (ENGLAND). What they could capture of these conversations was written down to the "Auswertungs-abteilung", where it was collated and evaluated, before being passed to the OKM and other interested bodies. Subject worked thus (as "Wachtgaengerin") for two years, and states she was not interested in the technical side of the work. The receivers were German, French and American sets, and were partly ordinary wireless sets. The operators received them already set on a certain wave-length, and had only to put on their head-phones and write down anything that came through. They sat sometimes for six hours without hearing anything. When something, which seemed of great interest, was going on, they focussed on it the different "Peiler", with which they were in direct contact. Of the "Peilung" itself subject states she has NO knowledge.

The station in BRUGES was destroyed in an air-raid on 28 May, 1944.

3. Marine Peil Nebenstelle, 1943, BORKUM.

After the destruction of the Peil Abteilung in BRUGES, subject was sent to BORKUM, where a similar station was in operation; but she was recalled to Peil Abteilung "FLANDERN", after a very short time, and states she can give no further information about the Nebenstelle in BORKUM.

4. Marine Peil Abteilung "FLANDERN", BRUSSELS.

In the meantime a replacement of the BRUGES Peil station had been started near BRUSSELS, to which subject was posted after her short stay in BORKUM. Similar work was carried out here, until the German forces were obliged to retreat, and BRUSSELS was left on 2 Sept. 1944, the Peil Abteilung being moved to GRONINGEN, in North HOLLAND.

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5. Peil Hauptstelle, 1944, GRONINGEN.

When BRUSSELS was left everything was loaded onto lorries and re-erected in GRONINGEN, though on a smaller basis. The same work was done here, but, being cut off from GERMANY, the service was discontinued on 11 Apr 1945. On 15 Apr 1945 subject was taken prisoner by Canadian troops at the hospital, where was serving as a nurse.

6. Names of Other Personnel Involved. These were given by subject as :-

Dienststellenleiter at the BRUGES, BRUSSELS and GRONINGEN stations:
Kapitaen zur See von HEIMBURG.

Dienststellenleiter at the station in BORKUM:
Oberleutnant (? zur See) Name forgotten by subject.

Subject states that they were in "Peil contact" with the following other stations: CAP GRIS-NEZ, alias "Grete"; MAASSLUIS (HOLLAND), alias "Masel" (?).

7. Note by Interrogator: The station in BRUGES was housed in the old chateau of TILLEGHEM; and in BRUSSELS the chateau de GAESBEEK was used for the same purpose.

STAUMUEHLE,
PADERBORN.

21st June, 1946.